

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 03068 01 OF 02 020108Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O 020105Z AUG 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2733
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 03068

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, IS, LE, UNSC
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: SITUATION IN KAWKABA

REF: (A) JERUSALEM 2090, (B) JERUSALEM 2087,
(C) BEIRUT 4384 AND PREVIOUS, (D) TEL AVIV 9718,
(E) TELECONS WITH DEPT

1. SUMMARY. UN HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ISRAELI CHARGE BOTH LATE JULY 31 AND AUG 1 TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER SITUATION IN KAWKABA AND URGE GOI ACTION WITH HADDAD TO PERMIT LAF UNIT TO PROCEED TO TIBNIN. IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST OF GOL, USYG URQUHART IS RECOMMENDING SYG MESSAGE TO BEGIN. MEANWHILE UN IS URGING LEBANESE FORCE TO REMAIN IN PLACE IN HOPE THAT CONTINUED NEGOTIATIONS CAN RESOLVE SITUATION SATISFACTORILY. UN'S LATEST WORD FROM AREA IS THAT INTERMITTENT SHELLING OF LAF UNIT WITH NORBATT RESUMED ABOUT 1800 LEBANESE TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. AMB LEONARD AND MISOFF MET WITH USYG URQUHART AND STAFF OFFICER LIU AFTERNOON OF AUG 1 TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION ON SITUATION IN KAWKABA AND PROSPECTS FOR LAF'S MOVE TO DESTINATION AT TIBNIN. LIU HAD JUST TAKEN CALL FROM TUENI IN BEIRUT CONVEYING GOL CONCERN OVER THREATS THAT HADDAD FORCES INTENDED TO OPEN FIRE ON LAF (APPARENTLY REF TO SITUATION REPORTED JERUSALEM 2090). MESSAGE URGED SYG TO CONTACT GOI AT HIGHEST LEVEL AND ALSO SAID GOL WAS PREPARED TO ENVISAGE, IF SYG SHOULD SO

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SUGGEST, TAKING MATTER TO SC AS RELATED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS 425 AND 426. LEONARD EXPRESSED VIEW THAT WALDHEIM MESSAGE TO BEGIN WAS GOOD IDEA AND URQUHART SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND THIS TO SYG. HE AGREED THAT SC MEETING WOULD SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE AND THOUGHT GOL USING THIS ONLY AS THREAT.

3. CONVERSATION WAS INTERRUPTED WHILE URQUHART TOOK TELEPHONE CALL FROM SYG'S REP IN BEIRUT, SAUNDERS, WHO CONVEYED TO URQUHART MUCH OF SAME INFO REPORTED BY JERUSALEM AND BEIRUT WITH ADDITION OF FACT INTERMITTENT SHELLING OF LAF UNIT (AND NORBATT WITH WHICH UNIT LOCATED) HAD BEEN RESUMED BY HADDAD ABOUT 1800 BEIRUT TIME. SAUNDERS INQUIRED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS WITH ISRAELIS TO GET CHANGE IN HADDAD POSITION, NOTING THAT IF THERE WAS NO HOPE FOR SUCH CHANGE GOL WISHED TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS, SUCH AS WITHDRAWAL OR HELICOPTER LIFT. AFTER CONSULTING LEONARD URQUHART TOLD SAUNDERS DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS WERE CONTINUING AND LEBANESE SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO SIT TIGHT AND ABOVE ALL NOT TO WITHDRAW. CONSISTENT WITH BEIRUT REFTELS, SAUNDERS ALSO REPORTED THAT IT APPEARS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO DEFER ISSUE OF HADDAD AND SHIDIAC AS THIS HAS NOW BECOME MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUE WITHIN GOL.

4. LEONARD TOLD URQUHART THAT AMB LEWIS HOPED TO TALK
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WITH WEIZMAN AGAIN TONIGHT, AUG 1 (MISOFF HAD BRIEFED URQUHART EVENING OF JULY 31 ON CONTENTS OF REF D PER DEPT AUTHORIZATION). HE INQUIRED IF SYG HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ISRAELIS. URQUHART SAID SYG HAD FINALLY REACHED ISRAELI CHARGE CAHANA LATE JULY 31. URQUHART THEN TELEPHONED CAHANA AGAIN HIMSELF.

5. AFTER RE-EMPHASIZING SYG'S CONCERN, URQUHART, IN RESPONSE TO CAHANA'S REPETITION OF ALLEGATIONS RE SYRIAN ROLE WITH LAF UNIT, TOOK STRONG LINE THAT IDEA OF MOVE BEING SYRIAN PLOT WAS RIDICULOUS. UN PERSONNEL WERE WITH LEBANESE, BEING SHELLED BY HADDAD, HE POINTED OUT, AND CONFIRMED SYRIANS WERE NOT PRESENT. HE EXPRESSED VIEW ISRAELI POSITION WAS SHORT-SIGHTED, THAT FAILURE OF THIS MOVE BY GOL AFTER MONTHS OF BEING URGED TO UNDERTAKE IT, WOULD BE MOST SERIOUS FOR LEBANESE, UN AND, IN LONG RUN FOR ISRAEL. IT WOULD CAUSE ENDLESS TROUBLE WITH ARABS. HE POINTED OUT THAT WALDHEIM WAS UNDER PRESSURE TO MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENT AND COULD NOT REMAIN SILENT INDEFINITELY. HE WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE TO REPORT TO SC. IF LAF NOT PERMITTED TO TAKE UP POSITION AT TIBNIN HE WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO INFORM COUNCIL IT HAD NOT

BEEN POSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT RES 425 AND UNIFIL UNABLE TO FULFILL ITS MANDATE. THIS WAS NOT JUST QUESTION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS AT KAWKABA BUT HAD FAR WIDER IMPLICATIONS FOR ALL CONCERNED. URQUHART URGED THAT ACTION BE TAKEN WITH HADDAD SO THAT QUESTION COULD BE SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED IN COURSE OF TOMORROW, AS HE FEARED IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO HOLD SITUATION QUIET BEYOND THAT POINT. HE NOTED THAT DESPITE SHELLING, NOT SINGLE SHOT HAD BEEN FIRED BACK AT HADDAD BY EITHER LEBANESE OR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 03068

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UNIFIL. ALTHOUGH CAHANA APPARENTLY MADE MANY OF SAME ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD TO AMB LEWIS, HE RECOGNIZED SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION, AGREED TO REPORT APPROACH IMMEDIATELY AND TO INFORM URQUHART AS SOON AS HE HAD RESPONSE.

6. IN CONCLUDING MEETING URQUHART REITERATED TO LEONARD SYG'S GREAT APPRECIATION FOR US EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THIS SITUATION AND AGREED TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH ON DEVELOPMENTS.

7. LEONARD SUBSEQUENTLY TELEPHONED CAHANA TO MAKE MANY OF SAME POINTS URQUHART HAD MADE AND TO EMPHASIZE US CONCERN OVER SITUATION. HE ALSO SPOKE WITH NORWEGIAN CHARGE, SUGGESTING THAT NORWEGIAN GOVT MIGHT WISH TO TAKE QUESTION UP WITH ISRAELIS IN LIGHT OF FACT NORWEGIAN TROOPS WERE UNDER FIRE FROM FORCES OVER WHICH ISRAEL EXERCISED GREAT INFLUENCE. CHARGE NOTED

NORWEGIAN CHIEF OF STAFF HAD HAD DISCUSSIONS IN ISRAEL
SEVERAL DAYS AGO, BUT LEONARD POINTED OUT SITUATION HAD
CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY IN LAST TWO OR THREE DAYS.
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